

**MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**

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Translation of Foreign Academic Credentials

Applicants are advised to submit the application for licensure in a timely fashion and to remember that the Board is unable to evaluate credentials prior to receipt of the application and fee. Applications are reviewed in the order in which they are received, and it generally takes 60 working days from the date of receipt to complete the initial review. Once an application file is complete, the law allows another 100 days for processing. Just as each medical college makes its own admission decisions and offers its own curriculum, each state has its own licensing requirements. Thus, the only way the Board can be certain that an applicant has met the specific requirements for licensure in California is to fully evaluate the applicant's credentials and document compliance with the licensing requirements. This is a separate process from that required for admission to medical school.

For the Board to fairly evaluate compliance with California requirements, any applicant with non-English, foreign academic credentials must provide certified translations of those original transcripts and academic documents. These must be original, official, certified documents. Photocopies are not accepted. When requesting official transcripts and academic documents, an applicant whose education was completed at an institution in a bilingual country where English is one of the official languages, may be able to avoid the necessity of arranging for a translation by asking the school to generate an English language version of the transcript.

Each translator must provide an original declaration with each translation attesting to his/her fluency in the particular language and certifying under penalty of perjury that the translation is complete and accurate to the best of the translator's ability and knowledge. The Board highly recommends, but does not require, that applicants with non-English academic credentials use one of the following sources for translation:

- 1. Translator accredited by the American Translators Association (ATA):** The ATA accredits individual translators by examination. Although accreditation is available only to individuals, ATA membership includes not only individuals but companies that employ accredited translators. An accredited translator must sign the translation and declaration in the presence of a Notary Public, unless the translation is a service provided by a known translation agency which affixes the document with its own official seal. ATA membership includes accredited translators residing in the US, Canada, Mexico, and overseas. Although the ATA does not make referrals, a listing of accredited translators and member companies is available through its web site at www.atanet.org. The ATA may be reached by phone at 703-683-6100 or by e-mail at ata@net.org.
- 2. Certified or registered court interpreter:** Some state court systems offer examinations for certification or registration of court interpreters. In California, the Judicial Council is charged with these functions. Information on court interpreters is available through the Judicial Council at 415-865-7530. General information is available via its web site, www.courtinfo.ca.gov. The Judicial Council has contracted with Cooperative Personnel Services (CPS) for examination and certification of Certified Administrative Hearing and Medical Interpreters. A master list of these interpreters is available at the CPS web site, www.cps.ca.gov, or telephone at 916-263-3600. The court interpreter must sign the translation and declaration in the presence of a Notary Public. Applicants residing outside California but within the United States may call the National Center for State Courts at 757-259-1517 for information on certification and registration of interpreters in other states.

Applicants who present documents in a language for which accredited translators or certified/registered court interpreters are not readily available may require special assistance. The usual next step is to inquire at the nearest consulate representing the nation in which the documents originated.